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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-fourth session
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

QUESTION OF THE REALIZATION IN ALL COUNTRIES OF ECONOMIC SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS CONTAINED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND IN THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, AND STUDY OF SPECIAL PROBLEMS WHICH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FACE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THESE HUMAN RIGHTS

Note by the Secretariat

1. In its decision 1997/103, entitled "Effects of structural adjustment policies on the full enjoyment of human rights", the Commission on Human Rights decided to authorize the open-ended working group on structural adjustment programmes and economic, social and cultural rights to meet for one week, at least four weeks before its fifty-fourth session. The Commission also decided to request its Chairman to appoint an independent expert to study the effects of structural adjustment policies on economic, social and cultural rights in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights. The expert should update previous work done on this subject within as well as outside the United Nations and submit a consolidated study, including a draft set of guidelines, to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session. The Secretary-General was requested to circulate the study to Governments, United Nations bodies, in particular the regional commissions, the specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, particularly those involved in development, and academic institutions and organizations representing disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, and to invite them to submit their comments thereon to the working group at its next session.

2. The Chairman of the Commission subsequently appointed Mr. Ismail-Sabri Abdalla (Egypt) as independent expert. The independent expert was invited by the Secretariat to submit his study by 15 December 1997 in order to ensure its timely circulation before the second session of the working group scheduled to be held from 16 to 20 February 1998. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the independent expert was unable to submit his report.

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